



What You Should Know About EPA's Tap Water Sampling in Selected Homes

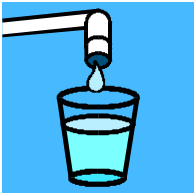
Environmental Investigation in McFarland, California

In response to a request from residents, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is evaluating current environmental conditions in McFarland, California. The evaluation includes the investigation of drinking water, surface water, soil and air.

Drinking Water Investigation — Two Phases



EPA is currently conducting a drinking water investigation, which has been divided into two phases. The first phase, conducted in July 1997, included the sampling of all active and inactive drinking water wells and the municipal water storage tank.



EPA will begin the second phase of drinking water sampling in McFarland in early 1998. The second phase includes the sampling and analysis of selected water taps throughout the municipal system, including taps in the McFarland library, schools, parks and homes.

If Your Home Is Part of the Tap Water Study

EPA will contact residents who have volunteered and are selected to participate in the home tap water sampling study at least 3 days in advance to confirm and schedule the sampling.

Water that sits for some time in the pipes in your home may have higher levels of lead and copper. To test for this, EPA will sample water from your tap before and after your first use of it in the day. The "first draw" samples must come from tap water that has been sitting a minimum of 6 hours.

EPA will collect the "first draw" samples from your taps at about 6 a.m. After this sample is collected, you will be allowed to use your water as usual. We will return later that day to collect additional samples.

So that you don't inadvertently use your water during the 6-hour, no-water-use period, we will arrive at your home the night before your tap water is sampled to install a temporary seal on your water taps to remind you not to use them. We may also turn off the water to the toilet.

To minimize the inconvenience this might cause you, we are providing bottled water for you to use for drinking, cooking, washing, and flushing the toilet.

Instructions on flushing your toilet using bottled water

Depending on your plumbing setup, we may need to turn off the water to your toilet. **If the water is turned off**, you may flush your toilet by removing the top from the tank on the back of the toilet. Pour water into the tank until the rubber ball rises enough to force the toilet to flush.

If the water to your toilet is not turned off, pour approximately 3 gallons directly into the bowl until the toilet flushes itself.

When the analysis of the results is completed

Residents whose tap water is sampled will receive the results for their own house. Final reports will show the results from all the tap water samples, but the addresses of the homes will not be released to ensure the confidentiality of residents who participate in the study.